



State of Connecticut

Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission

18-20 Trinity Street

Hartford, CT 06106

Tel. (860) 240-8330

Fax (860) 240-0315

E-Mail: lprac@cga.ct.gov

Web Site: www.cga.ct.gov/lprac

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Isaías T. Díaz, Esq.

Vice Chair

Richard A. Cruz

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Danny Torres

Elena Trueworthy, M.S.

Acting Executive Director

Werner Oyanadel

Special Projects Director/ Grants Writer

Lucia Goicoechea-Hernández

Senior Legislative Secretary

Clarisa Cardone

MINUTES

LPRAC Regular Commission Meeting

July 17, 2013
Portuguese Cultural Center
Danbury, CT
5:30 p.m.

Commissioners Present:	Isaías T. Díaz, Esq., Francisco R. Borres, Yolanda Castillo, Richard A. Cruz, Lourdes Montalvo, Dr. Eugene Salorio and Elena Trueworthy, M.S.
Commissioners absent:	Ramón L. Arroyo, Honorable Migdalia Castro, Roberto Fernández, Rodríguez-Reyes and Danny Torres
Commissioner on the phone:	Dr. Agnes Quiñones
Staff:	Werner Oyanadel, Acting Executive Director, Lucia Goicoechea Hernández and Clarisa Cardone, Sr. Legislative Secretary

Tape 1 A

Chairman Díaz, Esq. called the meeting to order and asked **Secretary Commissioner Castillo** to do roll call. Note: Quorum was not established.

Motion made to suspend regular order of business by Commissioner Cruz and seconded by Commissioner Borres. Motion carries as follows:

5 Years: Commissioners Borres, Castillo, Cruz, Dr. Quiñones and Dr. Salorio

7 Absent: Commissioners Arroyo, Castro, Fernández, Montalvo, Rodríguez-Reyes, Torres and Trueworthy

Chairman Díaz, Esq. then introduced LPRAC's new Commissioner Dr. Agnes Quiñones.

Commissioner Quiñones introduced herself and spoke about her background and expertise in areas of education and willingness to work with everyone in the Commission to appropriately respond to the agency's legislative mandate. She is well versed on issues regarding Results Based Accountability, public policy and research.

Mr. Oyanadel welcomed Commissioner Quiñones to LPRAC and reminded everyone that back in 2008 LPRAC recognized her leadership and community involvement with one of LPRAC's highest recognitions i.e., the Latina Citizen of the Year Award.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Chairman Díaz, Esq. then reported the following:

1. LPRAC held a Press Conference at the Old Judiciary Room at the State Capitol on Tuesday, July 9th to announce the name of the two students that received LPRAC's Bank of America Scholarship. The scholarships were given out Cynthia Calderon from the City of Bridgeport and Edna Maldonado from Windsor, each of them will be receiving a scholarship in the amount of \$4,017.30 with a summer internship at Bank of America's headquarters.
2. On Tuesday, July 16th LPRAC hosted a preliminary meeting with the Commissioner of DSS as well as representatives from the Office of the Health Care Advocate, the Hispanic Health Council, Joe Rodriguez who owns several McDonald's Restaurants and employs over 300 people, and several other stakeholders. The main objective of this meeting was to discuss the impact of the affordable care act in the Latino community with an emphasis on Latino business owners. We also wanted to know how the state is preparing to outreach to our community regarding this new federal program. One of our functions as commission is to conduct educational and outreach activities intended to raise awareness of critical issues for the Latino and Puerto Rican population of the state and with the massive overhaul that is taking place, it is of paramount importance for our agency to be prepared. The meeting was very informative, Senator Art Linares was present, a representative from U.S. Senator Blumenthal's Office and the Chairwoman of the Health Equity Commission was also present. We are planning to partner with several of these stakeholders to develop a Hispanic media outreach campaign to help us raise awareness about the new changes in health care law.

3. FOI request was sent to the State Department of Education to inquire on the percentage of Latino students that have been suspended from schools the past 3 years as required by a motion that we approved last mo.
4. With regards to the letter that LPRAC needs to prepare to request an investigation of potential Civil Rights violations in Windham school system is currently on-hold pending more preliminary research. We are coordinating a telephone conference with the Attorney Juan Cartagena, President & General Counsel of Latino Justice (PRLDEF) to study this issue further to help us decide how we plan to proceed.
5. The Office of Legislative Management is developing an RFP to help us hire a consultant to work with our agency preparing a comprehensive population Accountability Report in RBA format as requested by our commission last month.

Motion made to accept Chairperson's report by Commissioner Castillo and seconded by Commissioner Cruz. Motion carries as follows:

7 Yeas: Commissioners Borres, Castillo, Cruz, Montalvo, Dr. Quiñones, Dr. Salorio and Trueworthy
5 Absent: Commissioners Arroyo, Castro, Fernández, Rodríguez-Reyes and Torres

Motion made to go back to regular order of business by Commissioner Cruz and seconded by Commissioner Castillo. Motion carries as follows:

7 Yeas: Commissioners Borres, Castillo, Cruz, Montalvo, Dr. Quiñones Dr. Salorio and Trueworthy
5 Absent: Commissioners Arroyo, Castro, Fernández, Montalvo, Rodríguez-Reyes and Torres

Public Participation:

1. **Emanuela Palmares Leaf**, Editor in Chief of the Tribuna Newspaper welcomed LPRAC to the Portuguese Cultural Center in the City of Danbury and asked if the commission was planning to include the Brazilian community to the legislative work of LPRAC in the near future. She highlighted the similar struggles affecting our communities in Connecticut in context with their population size.

Commissioner Cruz explained to Mrs. Palmares Leaf that bringing in Brazilians into the commission is a decision outside of our mandate; the legislative appointment process to LPRAC is the responsibility of legislative appointing authorities within the Connecticut General Assembly and not LPRAC. However, LPRAC as an agency is open to listening to diverse opinions at our board meetings from anyone that wishes to talk to us and everyone in the community regardless of race or ethnicity are welcomed.

Commissioner Trueworthy came in at 5:51 p.m. Quorum was established.

2. **Mr. Carlos Valenzuela**, Mortgage Originator in Danbury and Board President of the Hispanic Center of Greater Danbury also welcomed LPRAC to the City of Danbury and informed LPRAC Commissioners about their mission in the community. The Hispanic Center works as an advocate to help Hispanics enter and succeed in the City through a variety of programs. Services include providing Spanish-speakers with English-language help so that they can communicate effectively when, for instance, they visit a doctor, go on a job interview or need to understand something as basic as parking regulations. The center hosts health fairs and group health classes and also provides basic legal services.
3. **Ingrid Alvarez-DiMarzo, Executive Director** Board of Hispanic Center said that they have been around in the Danbury area a little bit over 43 years. It was originally started by a group of Puerto Rican residents living, conducting business in the City of Danbury and very quickly evolved. The agency evolved into a social service agency and they are the City of Danbury's Civic Engagement Organization, they graduate and create all the new citizens in the city, including ESL, the whole immigration process, etc. They are also turning into a Multicultural Center of Western Connecticut. There are 47 different languages spoken in the Danbury High School. The large barrier is still very much an obstacle specifically in the senior population among others.

Tape 1 B

4. **Mayor Mark D. Boughton** welcomed and thanked LPRAC for having its meeting in the City of Danbury. He then said that Danbury has 49 different languages spoken in High School, they have the largest collection of Shia Muslims that live in Danbury, they have the largest Indian population, largest Pakistani an population, a growing Bangladeshi population, South African population, large Brazilian population, and large Latino population. Mr. Oyanadel has been very helpful over the years with us and worked very closely with him and admires and respects the work he has done in the commission. He then mentioned that he would like to help LPRAC via the legislative appointing authorities to get people from the Danbury area to become LPRAC board members.
5. **Carolina Bartoleto** from the CT Students for Dreams thanked LPRAC for opening up LPRAC's scholarship program to undocumented immigrant students. She said that LPRAC is the only state agency to provide this opportunity to Connecticut Dreamers.

Mr. Oyanadel commended their organization entitled "CT Students for Dream" because it was thanks to their advocacy that the LPRAC voted in December of 2012 to open up our agency's scholarship program to undocumented students. Mr. Oyanadel also stated that he believes that the main reason why the CT Dream Act passed in Connecticut was in large part due to their advocacy.

6. **Ana Malloney** – Greater Danbury Health Center. They are working on enrolling and outreaching to the different members of other population and the Latino population businesses as to how they are going through the Exchange and Husky/Medicaid Expansion Program. She also said that Sara Arroyo does the SNAP enrollment.
7. **Lisa Revis** previously Rodríguez is an immigration attorney and teaches Citizenship classes. She said that some of the families she works with would like to have access to financial aid for application fees that are not waived by government. She knows that Ingrid has been able to work with some scholarships.

Motion made to close Public Participation portion by Commissioner Castillo and seconded by Commissioner Borres. Motion carries as follows:

6 Yeas: Commissioners Borres, Castillo, Cruz, Dr. Quiñones Dr. Salorio and Trueworthy

1 Abstention: Commissioner Montalvo

5 Absent: Commissioners Arroyo, Castro, Fernández, Rodríguez-Reyes and Torres

Commissioner Montalvo came in at 6:43 p.m.

ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Oyanadel presented a written report to LPRAC with the following information:

- **New LPRAC Commissioner:** We are delighted to inform you that one of our appointing authorities appointed a new Commissioner for our agency. Her name is Dr. Agnes Quiñones.
- **LPRAC and Bank of America Press Conference** – Bank of America presented an award of \$8,034.60 to the Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission (LPRAC) for disbursement as scholarships awarded to two very talented Hispanic female students. The two students were selected from applications received and reviewed by a subcommittee of the Special Projects Committee. The Bank's criteria for awards included: (1) A high grade point average (GPA) – the two young women selected have a GPA of 3.7 and 3.25; (2) Ability to do an internship at one of Bank of America's branches in Hartford beginning on July 15 through August 16, 2013; and (3) They needed to be going into the financial field as their major this fall. The two young women selected were: Miss Cynthia Calderon and Miss Edna Maldonado. The Chairman of the Board of the LPRAC together with Commissioners Danny Torres, Special Projects Committee Chairman, Commissioners Norma Rodriguez-Reyes and Lourdes Montalvo helped Bank of America Vice President for Government Relations; Dean Andrews along with LPRAC staff were available to recognize the two young women with their respective awards. LPRAC also provided a certificate of recognition to both of them. The Honorable Angel Arce and Edwin Vargas, also attended the press conference and addressed the two young women wishing them well in their future endeavors and congratulated them for the hard work they have put into their academics and volunteerism in their respective communities;
- **Public Information Committee/Priorities and Legislation Committee:** On Tuesday, July 16, 2013 the committee met with several stakeholders and elected officials to discuss how the state is preparing to roll out the Federal Affordable Care Act (ACA) & Health Insurance Market Place with a focus on health equity for the Latino community of our state. This preliminary discussion also played an emphasis at reviewing both the effects of the ACA from both a client and service provider's perspective. Our expectation in the committee is to have additional meetings in preparation of a larger educational outreach campaign to inform our population about the upcoming healthcare changes on the way. Some of the guests in attendance at this meeting included: Commissioner Roderick Bremby from the State Department of Social Services, Samantha Paz from the Hispanic Federation, Legal Counsel Damien Fontanella from the Office of the Health Care Advocate, Jose Ortiz, President of the Hispanic Health Council, Yolanda Caldera-Durant from the Connecticut Health Foundation, Dr. Marie Spivey, Chairperson of the Health Equity Commission, Joseph A. Rodriguez, Owner of Several McDonalds businesses, State Senator Art Linares, Joe Rodriguez from U.S. Senator Blumenthal's Office, LPRAC Commissioner Rick Cruz, Chairman Isaias Diaz, and I;
- **Civic Engagement Ad Hoc Committee:** Commissioner Francisco Borres and I have been discussing over the phone this past week how the committee will be working in the next few months. The committee will be meeting quarterly and all the dates will be sent to all commissioners to request their help joining the group that will focus their attention primarily on creating public awareness about the importance to vote.

Motion made to accept Acting Executive Director's report by Commissioner Cruz and seconded by Commissioner Montalvo. Motion carries as follows:

7 Yeas: Commissioners Borres, Castillo, Cruz, Montalvo, Dr. Quiñones, Dr. Salorio and Trueworthy

5 Absent: Commissioners Arroyo, Castro, Fernández, Rodríguez-Reyes and Torres

PUBLIC INFORMATION/TALENT BANK COMMITTEE REPORT

As Commissioner Rodríguez-Reyes Chairperson for this committee was absent, report was tabled.

PRIORITIES & LEGISLATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Commissioner Cruz, Chair for this committee tabled the report.

SPECIAL PROJECTS COMMITTEE REPORT

Commissioner Montalvo spoke on behalf of **Commissioner Torres**, **Chairman of this committee** about the 16th Annual Scholarship Ceremony on Saturday, August 31st, 2013. Then she passed the floor to Mrs. Goicoechea Hernandez, Special Projects Director/Grants Writer.

Mrs. Goicoechea Hernandez reported on the following:

1. On July 1st the subcommittee on scholarships met and there were 26 applications total for the LPRAC scholarship which are what the Board approved in March was 20 students and \$1,500 each. We received 26 applications but of the 26, 13 were incomplete and were not considered because there is language in our application that indicates that if your application is incomplete, we don't consider it so there were 13 that were selected to receive \$1,500 each. Because we had 13 instead of 20, we had allotted \$30,000 at the March 4th meeting. The subcommittee that day made a recommendation that they bring to the board whether or not we should allot the entire amount with will give the students an additional \$800.00 which will bring it to \$2,300.
2. Also, they need approvals for the Latina Citizen who is Ileana Velázquez of Danbury, CT, for the Latino Citizen it is Felix Viera who is from La Puertorriqueñísima. For Community Service for the very first time, we have four organizations as follows: Advocacy Unlimited from Wethersfield, the East Hartford Community Resource Center and the New Haven Firefighters.

Commissioner Montalvo mentioned that there was a brief discussion on the LPRAC Retreat. It was discussed at the last meeting the possibility of putting a small Ad Hoc Committee together to see what will be the topics that will actually benefit the commission. This will be discussed at the next Special Projects Committee meeting according to the Chairman of this committee.

Motion made to accept the Special Projects Committee report by Commissioner Cruz and seconded by Commissioner Castillo.

Discussion:

Commissioner Montalvo spoke about the music for the scholarship ceremony. She suggests Joe Díaz who gave them a good rate at the last event that LPRAC held.

Commissioner Cruz said that he knows of another group and try to find a third group.

Motion carries as follows:

7 Yeas: Commissioners Borres, Castillo, Cruz, Montalvo, Dr. Quiñones, Dr. Salorio and Trueworthy

5 Absent: Commissioners Arroyo, Castro, Fernández, Rodríguez-Reyes and Torres

RBA COMMITTEE

Mr. Oyanadel reported that they sent a memo to Legislative Management to get an RFP for the RBA report. He said that the company Charter Oak is the only company that he knows that can conduct this type of work. John Harnick who is the Director of Finances of Legislative Management would like to have a meeting with members of LPRAC to create the right contract to get the RFP moving forward. He gave him a couple of dates. He will call Commissioner Montalvo and any Commissioner that would like to be part of that.

Commissioner Montalvo asked if he contacted if there's anyone else in case they can suggest somebody else.

Mr. Oyanadel mentioned that John Harnick said that the Connecticut General Assembly is creating an RFP to get more companies aware of this type of work. He said that this is the only state in the country that is doing a Population RBA.

Commissioner Quiñones said that Charter Oak is the only one in the State.

Motion made to accept the RBA report made by Commissioner Montalvo and seconded by Commissioner Trueworthy.

Discussion:

Commissioner Montalvo spoke about receiving a call from the Homeland Security.

Tape 2 B

Commissioner Montalvo said that they talked about the big storms that had happened. She is wondering if the commission would like to work in getting Homeland Security on the issue of the information not getting to the Latino population in the state of Connecticut, from the first ice storm they still haven't received any help. We need to outreach on this.

Motion carries as follows:

7 Yeas: Commissioners Borres, Castillo, Cruz, Montalvo, Dr. Quiñones, Dr. Salorio and Trueworthy

5 Absent: Commissioners Arroyo, Castro, Fernández, Rodríguez-Reyes and Torres

AD-HOC COMMITTEE ON CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Chairman Díaz, Esq. announced that there was a switch in Ad-Hoc for Civic Engagement. Commissioner Borres is the new Chairman for this committee. There is no report at this time.

Commissioner Borres, Chairperson for this Committee said that he would like to table at this time and that both he and Mr. Oyanadel have begun discussing possible dates.

Mr. Oyanadel mentioned that Commissioner Borres wants to do quarterly meeting.

Commissioner Castillo said that this committee should look into working on the right to vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made to approve the minutes of May 15, 2013 by Commissioner Castillo and seconded by Commissioner Salorio. Motion carries as follows:

7 Yeas: Commissioners Borres, Castillo, Cruz, Montalvo, Dr. Quiñones, Dr. Salorio and Trueworthy
5 Absent: Commissioners Arroyo, Castro, Fernández, Rodríguez-Reyes and Torres

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made to approve the minutes of June 19, 2013 by Commissioner Castillo and seconded by Commissioner Borres. Motion carries as follows:

5 Yeas: Commissioners Borres, Castillo, Montalvo, Dr. Quiñones and Trueworthy
2 Abstentions: Commissioners Cruz and Salorio
5 Absent: Commissioners Arroyo, Castro, Fernández, Rodríguez-Reyes and Torres

OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

Motion made to increase amount to allot to 13 Promesa Youth from \$1,300 to \$2,300 made by Commissioner Quiñones and seconded by Commissioner Montalvo. Motion carries as follows:

7 Yeas: Commissioners Borres, Castillo, Cruz, Montalvo, Dr. Quiñones, Dr. Salorio and Trueworthy
5 Absent: Commissioners Arroyo, Castro, Fernández, Rodríguez-Reyes and Torres.

Motion made to approve the recommendations from the Special Projects Committee for the various Citizens of the Year Awards by Commissioner Salorio and seconded by Commissioner Trueworthy. Motion carries as follows:

7 Yeas: Commissioners Borres, Castillo, Cruz, Montalvo, Dr. Quiñones, Dr. Salorio and Trueworthy
5 Absent: Commissioners Arroyo, Castro, Fernández, Rodríguez-Reyes and Torres.

Motion made to approve the Special Projects Committee nominations for Community Service Awards made by Commissioner Salorio and seconded by Commissioner Montalvo. Motion carries as follows:

7 Yeas: Commissioners Borres, Castillo, Cruz, Montalvo, Dr. Quiñones, Dr. Salorio and Trueworthy
5 Absent: Commissioners Arroyo, Castro, Fernández, Rodríguez-Reyes and Torres.

Motion made to accept the decision of the Special Projects Committee on the 13 students to receive the Promesa Students Scholarship Awards by Commissioner Salorio and seconded by Commissioner Montalvo. Motion carries as follows:

7 Yeas: Commissioners Borres, Castillo, Cruz, Montalvo, Dr. Quiñones, Dr. Salorio and Trueworthy
5 Absent: Commissioners Arroyo, Castro, Fernández, Rodríguez-Reyes and Torres.

Mr. Oyanadel mentioned the letter to the Federal Trade Commission.

Chairman Díaz, Esq. asked about LPRAC 20th Anniversary Celebration.

Commissioner Castillo said that we need members to sign up.

Motion made to adjourn at 7:30 p.m. by Commissioner Cruz and seconded by Commissioner Montalvo. Motion carries as follows:

7 Yeas: Commissioners Borres, Castillo, Cruz, Montalvo, Dr. Quiñones, Dr. Salorio and Trueworthy
5 Absent: Commissioners Arroyo, Castro, Fernández, Rodríguez-Reyes and Torres.

Respectfully submitted by,

Yolanda Castillo, Secretary,
LPRAC Board

YC:cjc